

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 TRSE-00 /067 W
-----230424Z 071614 /75

R 221600Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5996
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0621

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PFOR SF
SUBJ: SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSE MINISTER ANNOUNCES LONGER
CALL-UPS, WARNS WEST

REF: CAPE TOWN A-33

1. SUMMARY. ADDRESSING PARLIAMENT APRIL 21, SAG DEFENSE MINISTER BOTHA ANNOUNCED THAT INITIAL PERIODS OF DUTY FOR SERVICEMEN WOULD BE INCREASED FROM 12 TO 24 MONTHS AND SUBSEQUENT TEMPORARY DUTY PERIODS WOULD ALSO BE INCREASED. A NEW COLORED CITIZEN FORCE UNIT WILL BE SET UP IN THE SADF. HE PROVIDED A FEW DETAILS ON WHERE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMS ORIGINATE. FINALLY HE WARNED THE WEST OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUTH AFRICA IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNISM. END SUMMARY.

2. SPEAKING DURING THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE DEFENSE BUDGET, MINISTER OF DEFENSE P.W. BOTHA SAID LEGISLATION WOULD BE INTRODUCED TO INCREASE THE INITIAL PERIOD OF NATIONAL SERVICE FROM 12 TO 24 MONTHS. FLEXIBILITY WOULD BE BUILT INTO THE BILL TO ALLOW THE
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DEFENSE MINISTRY TO INCREASE OR DECREASE THIS PERIOD BY SIX MONTHS DEPENDING UPON THE NEEDS OF THE SERVICE. SUBSEQUENT CITIZEN FORCE OBLIGATIONS, NOW 95 DAYS SPREAD OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS, WILL BE INCREASED TO 240 DAYS NORMALLY TO BE SERVED 30 DAYS A YEAR FOR 8 YEARS. THE LEGISLATION, WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN PUBLISHED, WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 1978.

3. BOTHA ALSO ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A VOLUNTEER CITIZEN FORCE MAINTENANCE UNIT FOR COLORED SOLDIERS. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST CITIZEN FORCE UNIT FOR COLOREDS. THE UNIT WILL BE WHITE-OFFICERED INITIALLY, BUT EVENTUALLY COLOREDS WILL TAKE OVER ALL POSTS. THE UNIT WILL EVIDENTLY BE NON-COMBATTANT AND CONSIST OF SUCH POSITIONS AS STOREMEN, CLERKS, DRIVERS, AND SUPPLY HANDLERS.

4. DENYING OPPOSITION CHARGES THAT SOUTH AFRICA BOUGHT MILITARY EQUIPMENT ON THE BLACK MARKET OR THAT IT WAS DEPENDENT ON FRANCE, BOTHA SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICA PRODUCED 57 PERCENT OF ITS OWN MILITARY EQUIPMENT. OF THE REMAINING 43 PERCENT, 20 PERCENT WAS SPENT ON OBTAINING NAVAL CRAFT, AND THE LAST 23 PERCENT WAS SPENT PURCHASING HARDWARE FROM A NUMBER OF SOURCES.

5. BOTHA WARDNED THE WEST THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE RUSSIAN STRATEGY AGAINST THE WEST AND THAT THE WEST WOULD LOSE THIS STRUGGLE STEP BY STEP IF IT DID NOT RECOGNIZE THIS. HE CRITICIZED THE WEST FOR LEAVING SOUTH AFRICA "IN THE LURCH A NUMBER OF TIMES," PARTICULARLY IN ANGOLA. HE SAID SOUTH AFRICA IS IMPORTANT TO THE WEST BECAUSE OF ITS FOOD PRODUCTION, RAILWAY NETWORK, INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT, CIVIL AND MILITARY AIRPORTS, MINERAL RICHES, ARMS FACTORIES, AND OTHER FACTORS.BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LEGISLATION, CONSCRIPTION, MILITARY EQUIPMENT
Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770430/aaaaazrf.tel
Line Count: 89
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 CAPE TOWN A-33
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2729104
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSE MINISTER ANNOUNCES LONGER CALL-UPS, WARNS WEST
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SF, (BOTH, PW)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ef2e30a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009